CHILDREN & FAMILIES MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

SPRING

Lent & Easter Resources
Valentines Day Crafts
St Patrick's Day Ideas
Mother's Day Crafts

Church of Ireland
Board for Ministry with Children & Families

www.cfm.ireland.anglican.org

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WELCOME

Whatever view you hold regarding the "official" start of Spring, there's one thing for sure - it's just around the corner and it's jam packed full of events, parades, festivals and many many services!

Spring is a unique time of excitement, joy and new beginnings balanced with reflection, and solemnity.

In Children and Families Ministry it's a particularly busy time, and so we hope that our Newsletter will help inspire you as those preparations take place.

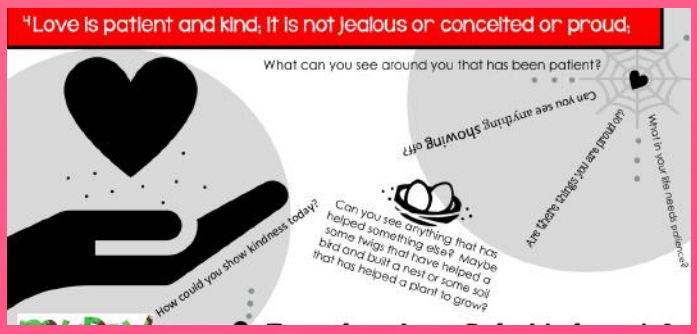
As always we would love to hear your feedback and see photos of the things you've been up to in your ministry. You can contact us via the website or by emailing: cfm@ireland.anglican.org

Valentines Day

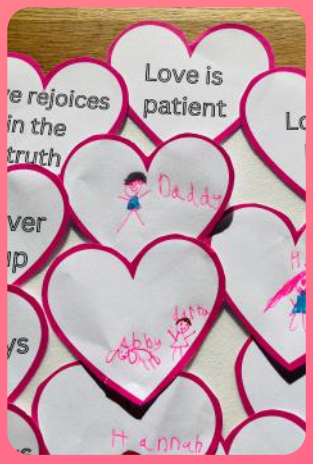
John 3:16 Valentine

Sometimes the old ones are the best - this has been around a number of years but it's still effective. Using the verse from John 3:16 to spell the word Valentine.
You can either use it as a simple A4 colouring page while you explain that as we head towards Easter we see God's amazing love shown to us in Jesus' death and resurrection.
Or you can download the card template from the resources page on our website - simply print, fold, colour and give away.

MUDDY LOVE!



We are huge fans of Muddy Church as you can probably tell! There's plenty to love on their page for Valentines day too with not one not two but FIVE different resources for you to download and use. Printable trails, craft ideas and talking points. Why not take a look for yourself here: https://www.muddychurch.co.uk/copy-of-resources-1



HEARTS OF TRUTH

We have a printable craft of love that can be used in a multitude of ways. If you head to the resources page of our wrbsite you will find the "hearts of truth" which each contain a line from 1 Corinthians 13 "love is patient..." as well as some blank hearts for your own words / drawings.
We used the hearts at home to create a valentine wall hanging by sticking them to an extra large paper plate. You could cut a circle of cardboard to form a hollow ring and make a wreath by sticking the hearts around. You could use them as part of a prayer space, or in any other way you want - we'd love to see how creatively you use them so please do email us your photos: cfm@ireland.anglican.org.

Let my heart be quilled!

A final quick idea seen below is to use the art of quilling (that's rolling paper to you and me!) to fill a card heart outline - simple even for the smallest hands to have a go!

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Steps through Lent

Intergenerational Talk

To help introduce the concept of the Steps through Lent activity you might like to use our intergenerational talk as a springboard for your ideas.

We have based the talk on the analogy of packing for a walking holiday and how it differs to packing for a holiday by the pool - you have to choose what to leave behind so that you can walk your trail with fewer burdens and greater focus.

Feel free to adapt the talk as you wish.

At the end of the talk you will also find a variety of ideas that you could use in a Messy Church setting, Children's clubs or just as a way of making your service more interactive.

Both the resource and the talk are FREE and can be found on the resources page of our website here:
https://cfm.ireland.anglican.org/steps-through-lent/

Family Lent Activity

To help our families engage with Lent this year, we have created a really simple activity. Based on the idea of Lent being a journey, there are steps which families can talk about and complete. They may choose to take a step each day or they may choose to do just one a week - there is no pressure. The steps include: Love, Grace, Prayer, Giving & Change. Together the adults & children choose a step to take, read the prompt and talk about how they might each take this step. For example with the step of Change they are encouraged to think of practical changes they can make to benefit those in their home, their school or the environment.

Each person then chooses to either write down or draw a picture of what they will do. The steps can then be stuck as a pathway towards a cross in the home or brought to Church to make a communal pathway to the Cross.

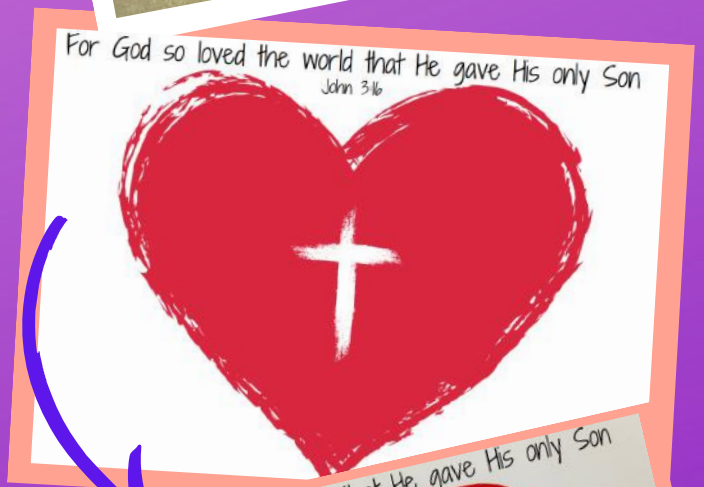
Easter

Tiers of Easter

This is a brand new resource which can be used at home or as part of an intergenerational service.
Together you create each tier and read a section of the Easter story. Using the templates provided you make the boxes that separate each tier - each box has Bible verses and a question to fill in if you choose. At each stage you stop to reflect on what that section of the story means to you, and you pray together.
The bottom tier reflects on the garden of Gethsemane and we think about things that are difficult in life, things we want to pray for.
The middle tier reflects on the crucifixion - the sacrificial love of God.
The top tier reflects on the resurrection - new beginnings, things to rejoice and give thanks for.
All instructions and templates can be found in the PDF which you can download from the resources page on our website:
https://cfm.ireland.anglican.org/resources/

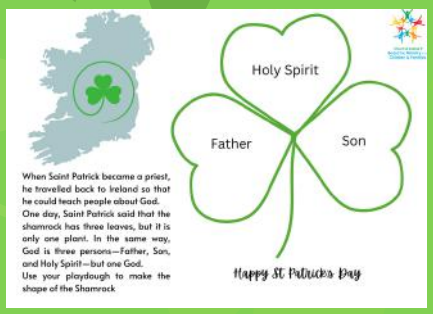
Hand on Heart

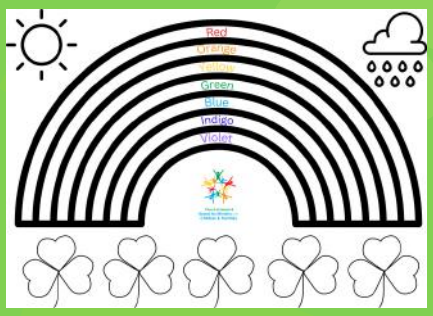
Another free resource for you from our website that could either be used for Valentine's Day or Easter.
This super simple downloadable pdf with John 3:16 can be printed off, then what almost every child loves to do - dip their hands in paint and make handprints.
The picture can be used as a take home Easter / Valentines card or you could even go one step further and frame them as mementos to give as a gift to parents.
Once again all you need to do is head to the resource page of our website:
https://cfm.ireland.anglican.org/resources/



St Patrick's Day

ST PATRICK'S DAY IS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT TO THE COMMUNITY, PROVIDE FAMILY EVENTS & BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.





Paddy's Day Play Dough Mats

Who doesn't love playdough?! It's a firm favourite in our house and a real go-to for rainy days.
Whilst the fun of play dough is making anything you want, it can also be used as a learning tool.
Many of us learn better when we're active, so what better way to combine learning with the fun of playdough?
On our resources page you will find two printable playdough mats. Both are Ideal for Children's clubs, toddler groups or use at home, we have two different mats to print - one can be used to help explain the Trinity to older children - or parents, the other is just for fun but can also be used to talk about rainbows, Gods promises as well as St Patrick's Day.
Print and either laminate or place in a plastic document cover and use masking tape to stick it to a tray or non varnished table.

Both resources can be found on the resource page of our website:
https://cfm.ireland.anglican.org/resources

True Treasures

It's hard to escape the little fella and his pot of gold during St Patrick's Day, but how can we turn the wee man into a helpful teaching tool ?!
Well, we've had a go at least! Based on the verse Luke 12:34
"Where your treasure there your heart will be also." This resource uses the pot of gold and the coins to help teach about what is truly of value.
Asking the question what things are most important / special to you? It could be toys, sports, tv, devices, make up, animals etc. The children take a coin for each thing they love and write it down, then stick it on the pot of gold.
We can then explain that while these things are all good in their own way, Jesus taught us that God's love is far more precious than anything on earth and that we should make sure we don't allow the things of earth distract us from spending time with God. His love is a far greater treasure and lasts for eternity.

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MOTHER'S DAY

Mother's day can be challenging to navigate at times - creating a balance of celebration and sensitivity. Below are some ideas to help you do both.

Services & Activity Ideas

It is said many times that there's no point re-inventing the wheel, and when it comes to Mother's day the Mother's Union truly have every wheel you could possibly need!

Their website is full of prayers, service outlines, crafts and Sunday club activities. So we suggest there's no better place to start with your plans than to hot foot (or Hot Wheel if you want to stick with the analogy!) there:

www.mothersunion.org/mothering-sunday-resources

The Challenges

It can be difficult to find ways to put into words how we want to acknowledge all the emotions of Mother's day, particularly in a Church service. So, Go Chatter (another BCFM favourite!) have put together some lovely simple videos you can download and use. Our favourite is "A day for you"

https://gochattervideos.com/downloads/mothers-day-a-day-for-you/

Another great source is SeeSaw who work with bereaved children, they have some vrey practical guidance as well as craft ideas here:

https://www.seesaw.org.uk/2021/03/09/1779/

Cups of love

Last year our children's club made cups of love to give to special women who cared for them: Mothers; Grandmothers ; Aunts; A neighbour who cared for them and one person gave theirs to a lady in Church who always makes her feel special.

They were simple & easy to make. Firstly the hug, which you may have seen before.

You could make it with painted hand prints if you have time for them to dry - we got the children to draw around their hands, cut them out and write a special message to the person they were giving to. They then decorated them. A helper measured some ribbon to the length of the child's outstretched arms and attached it to the bottom of the hands. We also had some wooden hearts from Mr Price / The Range

so the children decorated these with messages and jewels. Everything was then popped into a paper cup that had a few cocolates at the bottom.

BRAND NEW WEBSITE!

CHILDREN & FAMILIES MINISTRY. FULL OF RESOURCES, TRAINING, SUPPORT & MORE!

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